United Nations S/2009/492

Security Council

Distr.: General
25 September 2009

Original: English

Note by the President of the Security Council

The attached letter, dated 24 September 2009, from the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, was addressed to the President of the Security Council (see annex). In accordance with the request contained in the letter, the President is circulating it, together with its enclosure, as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex

Letter dated 24 September 2009 from the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you the enclosed written statement for the Security Council summit in connection with nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament which took place today in the Security Council Chamber (see enclosure).

I would greatly appreciate it if the present letter and its enclosure could be circulated as a document of the Security Council, under rule 39 of the Rules of Procedure.

(*Signed*) Archbishop **Celestino Migliore**
Apostolic Nuncio
Permanent Observer of the Holy See

Enclosure

Statement by H.E. Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See

Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament

24 September 2009

The Holy See supports the initiative undertaken by the Security Council, presided over this month by the United States, to convene a Summit at the level of Heads of State and Government to discuss nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. This is a very timely and crucial event considering that it is being held in conjunction with the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, where nine ratifications are still required for its entry into force. Furthermore, it is conducted in close proximity to the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, aimed at promoting universal adherence to, compliance with and full implementation of the Treaty. The Summit could also be considered as a valid and concrete response to the global appeal to seize new political momentum and openness in nuclear disarmament.

At the outset, it should be recognized that the Security Council's approach to weapons of mass destruction, including efforts to prevent proliferation of such weapons, has been largely at the country or case-specific level. The Council has firmly acted against some States' nuclear programmes and has been strong in its preventive response to threats by non-State actors. No achievements, however, have been reached in formulating plans for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments (Art. 26),* in particular nuclear weapons and their proliferation, as a necessary element in maintaining international peace and security and creating an environment favourable to ensuring human advancement (Art. 11).*

Endorsed by the Summit's high-level participants and following the five-point proposal of the Secretary-General in October 2008, the Security Council has yet another great opportunity to become a strong guarantor of security to all non-nuclear-weapon States in that they will not be the subject of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The Council is also encouraged to commence discussions and give concrete guidance on security issues in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation process. The Council should seize this moment and become a valid advocate in the cause of reaching a world free of nuclear weapons and take a leadership role in bolstering international support for multilateral nuclear arms control treaties and ongoing nuclear disarmament efforts. For this, the Holy See urges concerned States to adopt clear and firm decisions and commitments, and strive for a progressive and concerted nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear weapons assault life on the planet, they assault the planet itself, and in so doing they assault the process of the continuing development of the planet. In their nature, nuclear weapons are not only baneful but also completely fallacious. Taking into account that nuclear deterrence pertains to the Cold War era and is no longer justifiable in our days, the Holy See strongly advocates re-directing those

* The Charter of the United Nations.

military doctrines which continue to rely on nuclear weapons as a means of security and defence or even measure of power, which have evidently shown to be among the main causes preventing genuine nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, thus jeopardizing the very integrity of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Abandoning such doctrines is to freeze nuclear tests, still witnessed recently; it is to address seriously the issues of nuclear strategic arms, the tactical ones and the means of delivery of these weapons. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty therefore is of the highest priority, and the realization of which requires concrete steps towards its ratification by nine States. The universal banning of explosions would inhibit the development of nuclear weapons, contributing to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and preventing further damage to the environment. In this direction, it is crucial to halt the production and transfer of fissile material for weapons. The immediate commencement of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty is a matter of responsibility and it must not be further delayed.

The Cold War era has given to the world a nuclear arms race, where the winner was the State with the biggest and most powerful arsenals of nuclear weapons. Today's world demands a courageous leadership in reducing those arsenals to a complete zero. In order to achieve this, States need trust and security. Nuclear-weapons-free zones are the best example of trust, confidence and affirmation that peace and security is possible without possessing nuclear weapons. The Holy See thus encourages the nuclear-weapon States and those which possess such weapons to ratify all the protocols to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone treaties and strongly supports efforts to establish such a zone in the Middle East.

Celebration of the World Day of Peace on 21 September has concluded the Secretary-General's multiplatform campaign, "WMD-WeMustDisarm", aimed at raising awareness of the dangers and costs of nuclear weapons and whose acronym derives from that of weapons of mass destruction. The Holy See shares and firmly commends this strong message which must resonate in all the disarmament debates, leading to the creation of an environment favourable to ensuring human advancement (cf. Art. 11).* Disarmament and development are interrelated and complementary. Hence, to this campaign "We Must Disarm" we all may add: and the "World Must Develop" towards advancement of the culture of peace and achievement of the development goals for the enduring benefit of each individual member of the human family and for generations to come in a world free of nuclear weapons.